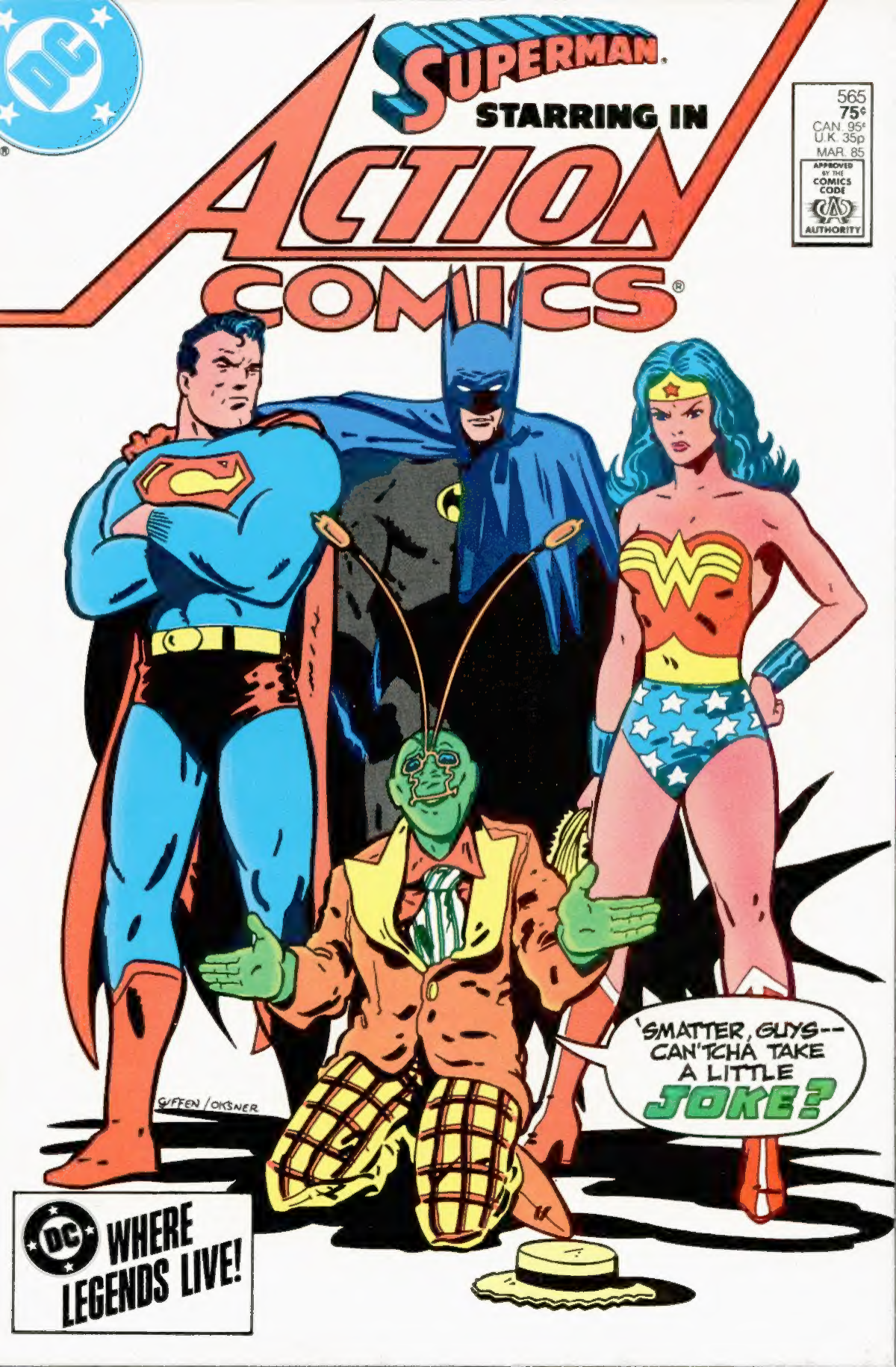
SUPERMAN
STARRING IN
ACTION COMICS
565
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 35p
MAR. 85
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
'SMATTER, GUYS-- CAN'TCHA TAKE A LITTLE JOKE?
GIFFEN / OKSNER
DC WHERE LEGENDS LIVE!

ROCKETED AS A BABY FROM THE EXPLODING PLANET KRYPTON, KAL-EL GREW TO MANHOOD ON EARTH--WHOSE YELLOW SUN AND LIGHTER GRAVITY GAVE HIM FANTASTIC SUPER-POWERS! IN THE CITY OF METROPOLIS, HE POSES AS MILD-MANNERED NEWSMAN CLARK KENT--BUT BATTLES EVIL ALL OVER EARTH--AND BEYOND--AS...

SUPERMAN

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

A TORRENTIAL STORM RAVAGES THE AFRICAN COUNTRY OF KURTISWANA...

KRAAK.

... AND FORAGING DEEPER INTO THE CHAOTIC JUNGLE ARE TWO PRISON ESCAPEES...

VEDDERS SWEARS HE KNOWS WHERE HE'S GOIN'--

-- BUT I'LL BELIEVE THIS JUNK ABOUT A "WIZARD CITY" ONLY WHEN --

DEXTER! WATCH OUT!

KA-BOOM!

Y-AAAH! I ALMOST FELL INTA THAT HOLE!

THOSE WEIRD TOWERS DOWN THERE -- THEN IT'S TRUE!

JUST LIKE I TOLD YOU, DEXTER -- DEEP BELOW TONS OF RUBBLE LIES THE FABULOUS WIZARD CITY!

WHEN A PANDORA'S BOX FROM THE PAST IS REOPENED AND WONDROUS WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION ARE UNLEASHED, AN UNDERPOWERED SUPERMAN FINDS HIMSELF HELPLESS TO STAVE OFF A SAVAGE ATTACK FROM...

"The WIZARD CITY WARRIOR"

MORT TODD: *writer* ★ KURT SCHAFFENBERGER: *artist*
BEN ODA: *letterer* ★ ANTHONY TOLLIN: *colorist* ★ JULIUS SCHWARTZ: *editor*

ACTION COMICS 565 (USPS 004-480). Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ACTION COMICS, DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside U.S.A. $11.00 in U.S. funds. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400. Printed in U.S.A.
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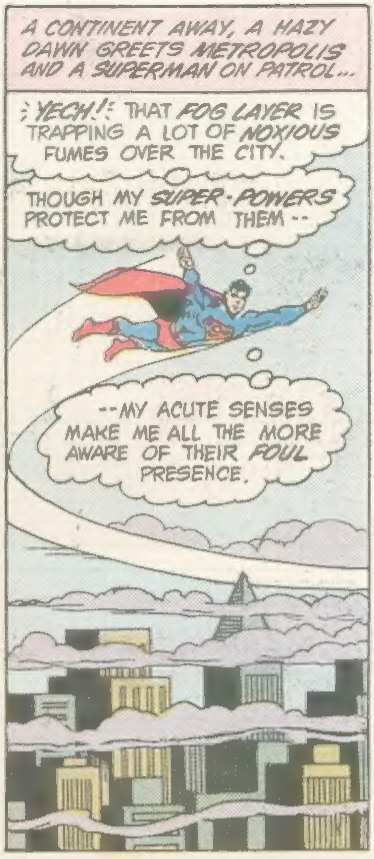
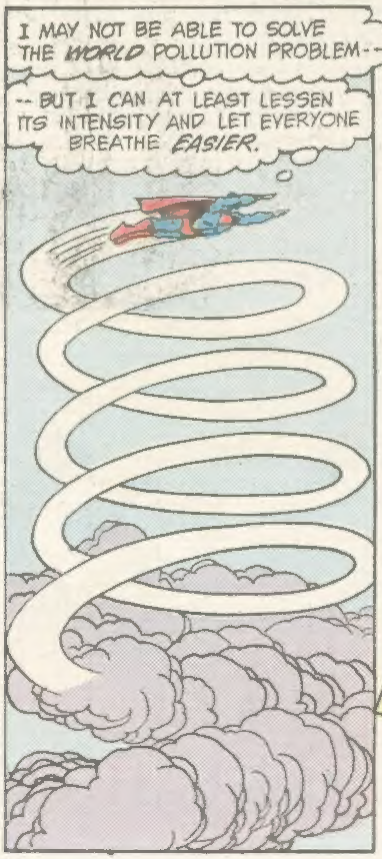
IN CONTRAST TO THE COLD AFRICAN NIGHT, THE CEMENT JUNGLE OF METROPOLIS BASKS IN THE BRIGHT SUN...
WGE
AH, YES. THE PEACE AND TRANQUILLITY UP HERE IS UNMATCHED!
EH? WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
S-SOMETHIN' COMIN' AT ME FAST! GONNA HIT ME!
WHOOOSH
HUH? IT'S GONE?! WHEW!
I GOTTA GET A JOB WITH LESS TENSION!
OF ALL THE TIMES I'VE ENTERED THE GALAXY BUILDING THROUGH THE STOCKROOM WINDOW, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I HAD TO MAKE ANOTHER ENTRY BECAUSE SOMEONE WAS WASHING THE WINDOW!
THE JANITOR'S ROOM WILL SERVE JUST AS WELL FOR A PLACE TO CHANGE--
--SO CLARK KENT CAN LEND JIMMY OLSEN A KRYPTONIAN ARTIFACT TO SHOW HIS FAN CLUB.
IT'S AN ANCIENT KRYPTONIAN HOLOGRAPH CRYSTAL WHICH PREDATED OUR 3-D VIDMOVIES.
BY MOVING TWO LENSES, THE IMAGE APPEARS TO MOVE--AS IN THIS ONE SHOWING TWO FIGHTERS PRACTICING KLURKOR.
THE CITY ROOM OF THE DAILY PLANET, SECONDS LATER...
AND ONE MORE DON'T, OLSEN-- DON'T SLAM THE--
SLAM!
DARN! I ASK PERRY TO LET ME COVER THE FRANNES FILM FESTIVAL--
2

--AND HE ASSIGNS ME A "LOST CITY" STORY IN DARKEST AFRICA!
OH, HI, CLARK! BOY, AM I BURNED UP--!
WELL, MAYBE THIS WILL COOL YOU OFF-- I'VE GOT THAT HOLO-CRYSTAL FROM SUPERMAN FOR YOU--
--AND SOME BAD NEWS, I CAN'T KEEP THAT LUNCH DATE WITH YOU AND YOUR DAD TODAY--GOT A SPECIAL JOB TO DO IN A HURRY!
SUCH IS THE LIFE OF A NEWSMAN, CHUM --I'LL GIVE HIM YOUR REGARDS.
MOMENTS LATER...
PROFESSOR MARK OLSEN IS A DEAR OLD FRIEND--
--BUT WHEN MY SUPER-VISION SPOTTED A HIGH-RISE BUILDING ON FIRE--THAT TOOK PRIORITY!
AND AS JIMMY LUNCHES WITH HIS DAD, RETIRED ARCHAEOLOGIST MARK OLSEN...
HOLY CATS, DAD! IF WHAT YOU TELL ME IS TRUE, THEN MY ASSIGNMENT COULD BE THE SCOOP OF THE YEAR!
DAYS LATER FINDS AN EAGER JIMMY OLSEN AT THE SITE OF THE LOST CITY IN KURTISWANA...
TOO BAD THE GOVERNMENT RAN OUT OF FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE EXCAVATION. NOT MUCH OF THE CITY'S BEEN EXPOSED.
IF I COULD GET INTO ONE OF THE TOWERS...
HEY! A TUNNEL'S BEEN BURROWED HERE!
I'LL GET MY SPELUNKING GEAR AND-- OOPS!
CRRUMBLE
3


A CONTINENT AWAY, A HAZY DAWN GREETS METROPOLIS AND A SUPERMAN ON PATROL...
;YECH!; THAT FOG LAYER IS TRAPPING A LOT OF NOXIOUS FUMES OVER THE CITY.
THOUGH MY SUPER-POWERS PROTECT ME FROM THEM--
--MY ACUTE SENSES MAKE ME ALL THE MORE AWARE OF THEIR FOUL PRESENCE.

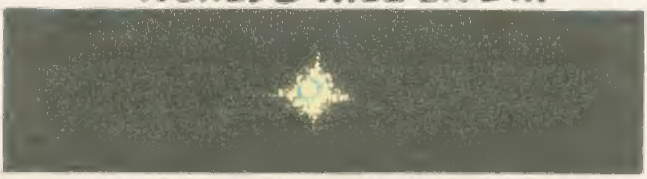

I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SOLVE THE WORLD POLLUTION PROBLEM--
--BUT I CAN AT LEAST LESSEN ITS INTENSITY AND LET EVERYONE BREATHE EASIER.

THE SCIENTISTS OF KRYPTON DEVISED EMISSIONLESS MOTORS AND POWER-SOURCES--
--BUT PAST EXPERIENCE HAS PROVEN THAT WHEN YOU INTRODUCE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO A CIVILIZATION NOT READY FOR IT--
WHOOSH!
--YOU'RE ASKING FOR B-I-I-I-I-G TROUBLE!

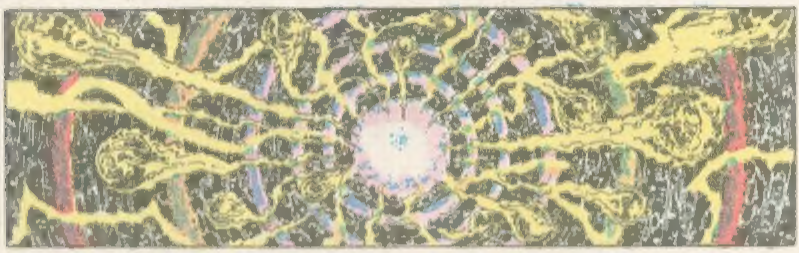
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

THE MOST EAGERLY-AWAITED COMIC BOOK EVENT IN 50 YEARS!

WORLDS WILL LIVE...



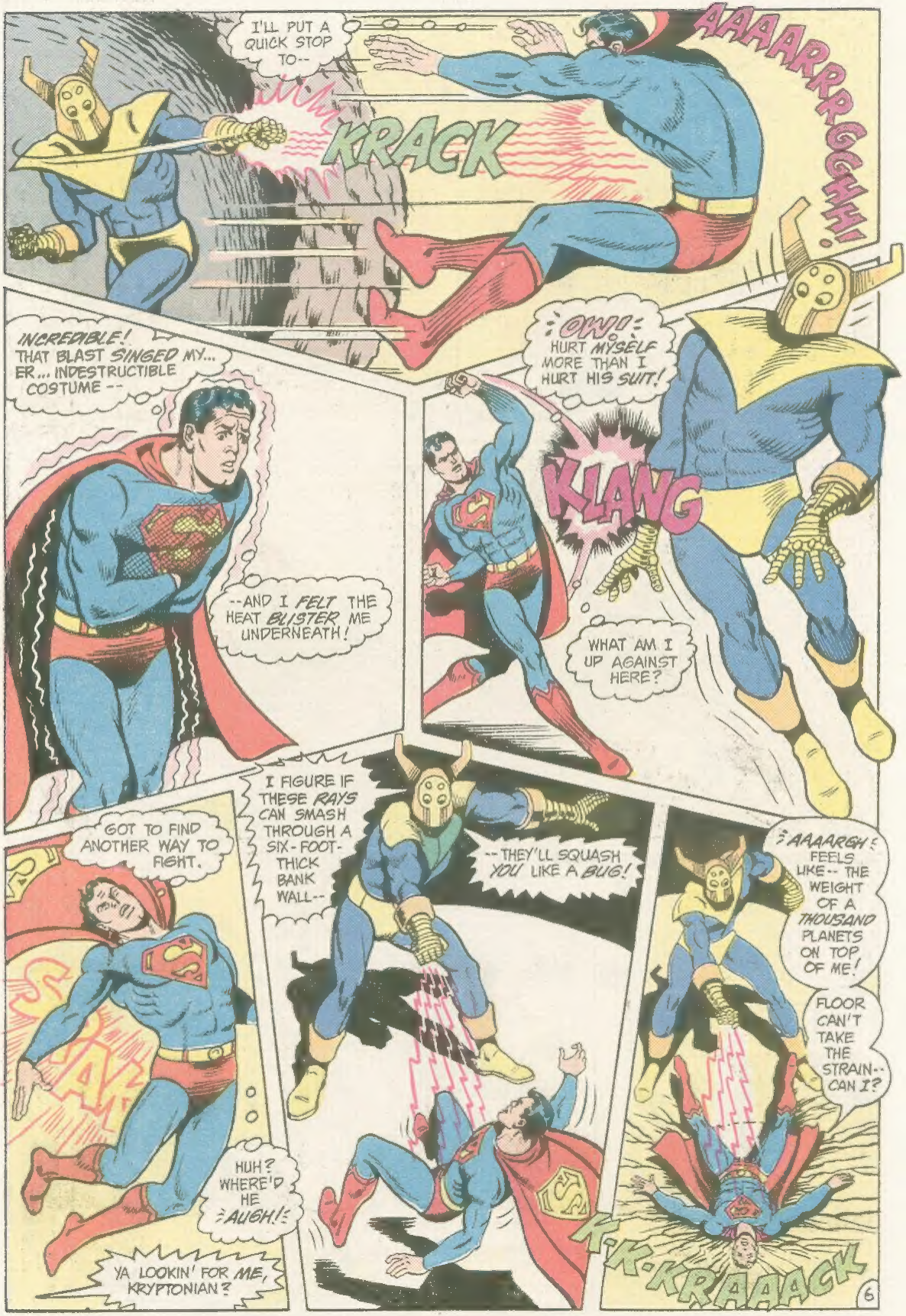
WORLDS WILL DIE...

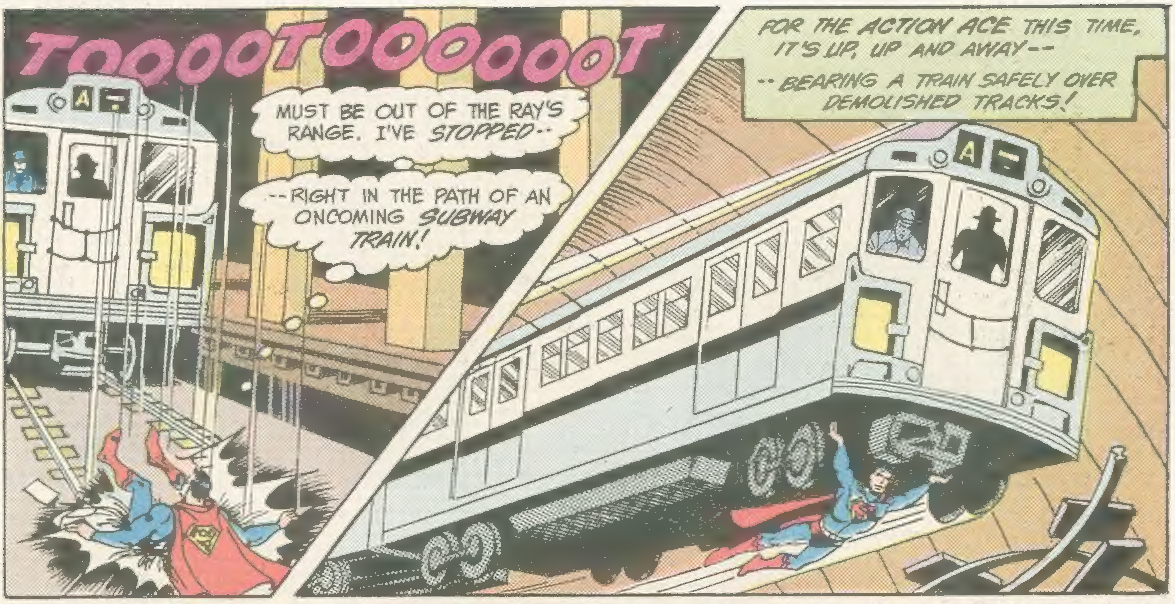


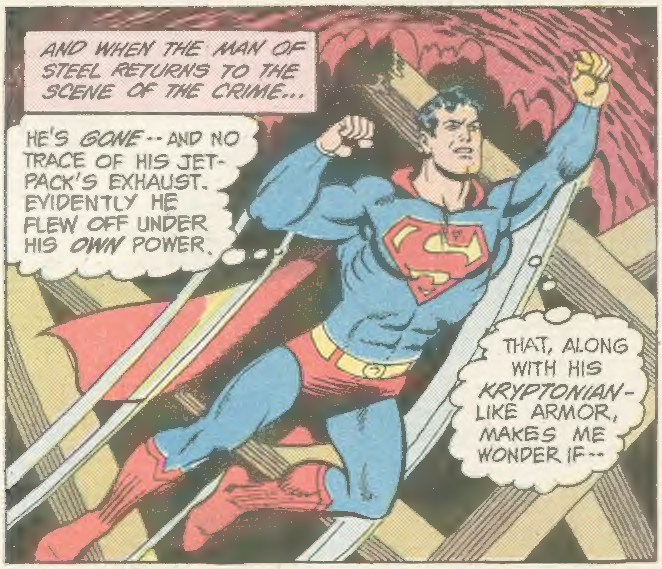
...AND THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!!

THE DC UNIVERSE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!

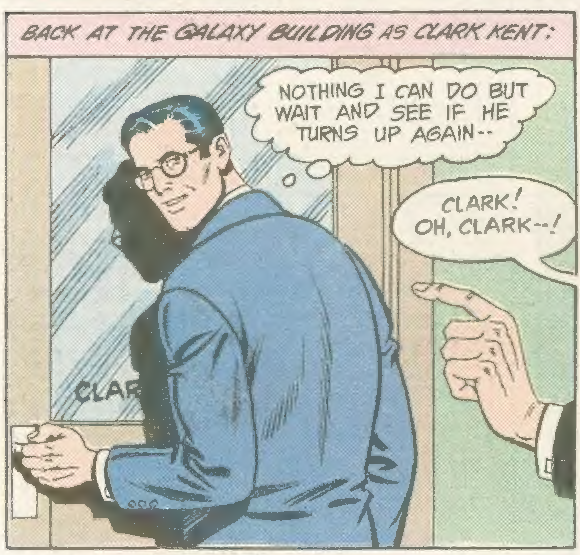
MEANWHILE, ON A LOCAL SIDE STREET...
I'LL NEED LOTSA CASH TO DO WHAT I CAME BACK TO METROPOLIS FOR-- THIS BANK'LL SUPPLY IT.
SUPERMAN SAYS:
SEAT BELTS
SAVE LIVES!
RRUUMMBBLEE
IF THE BIG RED "S" INTERFERES -- TOO BAD-- FOR HIM!
APT. 3D, 344 CLINTON STREET, METROPOLIS...
UH-OH! UNLESS A MAJOR FAULT LINE HAS OPENED UNDER METROPOLIS--
RRRR-RRRRR-RRRRR
-- THAT TREMOR WAS CAUSED BY AN UNNATURAL FORCE!
BESIDES -- EARTHQUAKES DON'T BREAK INTO BANKS!
ROCKETING TO THE SCENE, THE METROPOLIS MARVEL GETS AN EYEFUL...
GREAT STARS! AN ARMORED BANK BANDIT-- OVER SEVEN FEET TALL!
AND MY X-RAY VISION CAN'T EVEN PENETRATE THAT WEIRD ARMOR! IS IT A ROBOT OR--
NO! HE'S HUMAN! I HEAR HIS HEART AND RESPIRATION!
5


I'LL PUT A QUICK STOP TO--
KRACK
AAAARRRGGHH!
INCREDIBLE! THAT BLAST SINGED MY... ER... INDESTRUCTIBLE COSTUME --
--AND I FELT THE HEAT BLISTER ME UNDERNEATH!
:OW!: HURT MYSELF MORE THAN I HURT HIS SUIT!
KLANG
WHAT AM I UP AGAINST HERE?
GOT TO FIND ANOTHER WAY TO FIGHT.
I FIGURE IF THESE RAYS CAN SMASH THROUGH A SIX-FOOT-THICK BANK WALL--
--THEY'LL SQUASH YOU LIKE A BUG!
:AAAARGH: FEELS LIKE-- THE WEIGHT OF A THOUSAND PLANETS ON TOP OF ME!
FLOOR CAN'T TAKE THE STRAIN-- CAN I?
SMAK
HUH? WHERE'D HE :AUGH!:
YA LOOKIN' FOR ME, KRYPTONIAN?
K-K-KRAAACK
6

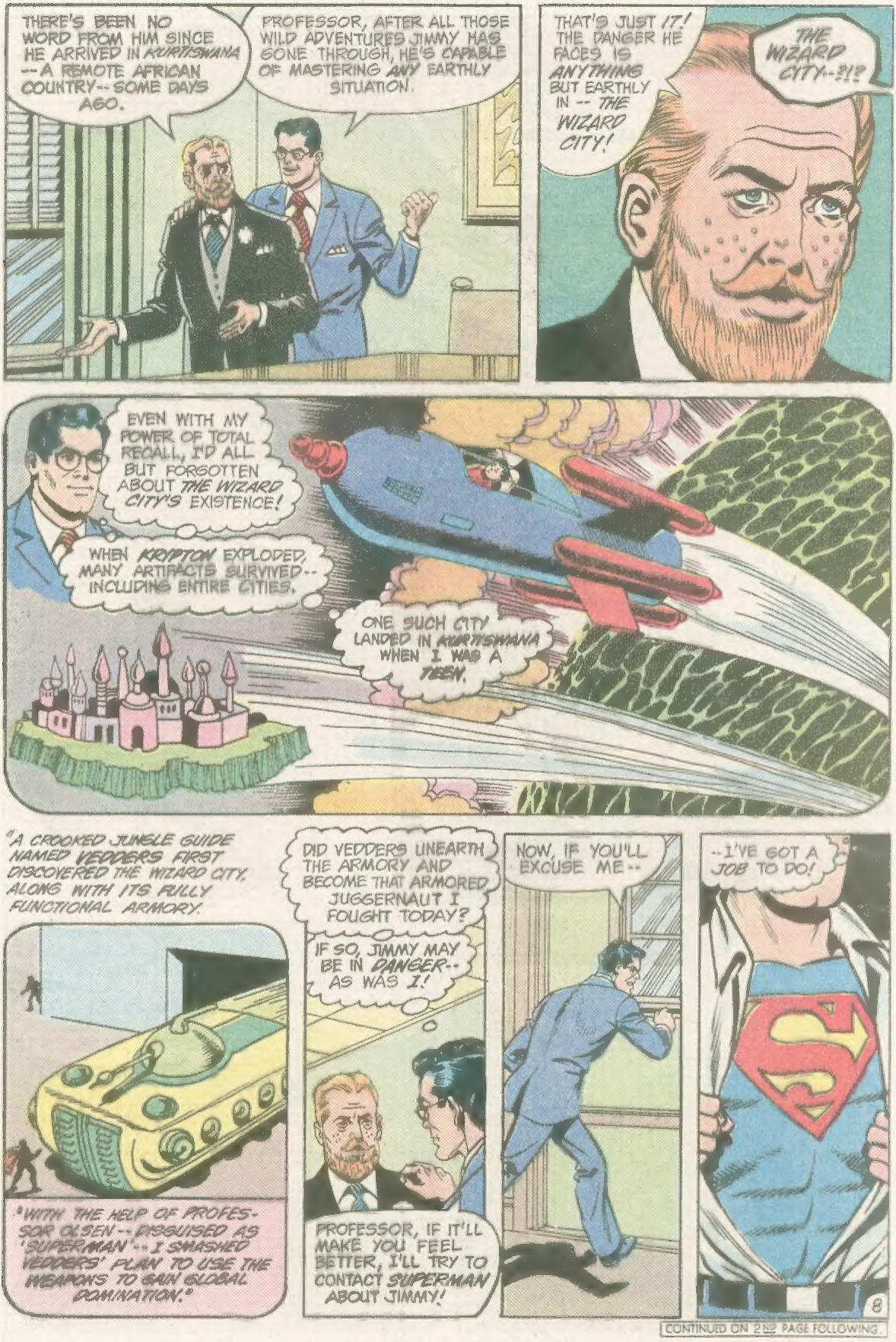

TOOOOTOOOOOOT
MUST BE OUT OF THE RAY'S RANGE. I'VE STOPPED--
--RIGHT IN THE PATH OF AN ONCOMING SUBWAY TRAIN!
FOR THE ACTION ACE THIS TIME, IT'S UP, UP AND AWAY--
-- BEARING A TRAIN SAFELY OVER DEMOLISHED TRACKS!


AND WHEN THE MAN OF STEEL RETURNS TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME...
HE'S GONE -- AND NO TRACE OF HIS JET-PACK'S EXHAUST. EVIDENTLY HE FLEW OFF UNDER HIS OWN POWER.
THAT, ALONG WITH HIS KRYPTONIAN-LIKE ARMOR, MAKES ME WONDER IF--

-- I'VE BEEN FIGHTING ANOTHER SURVIVOR OF MY NATIVE PLANET!

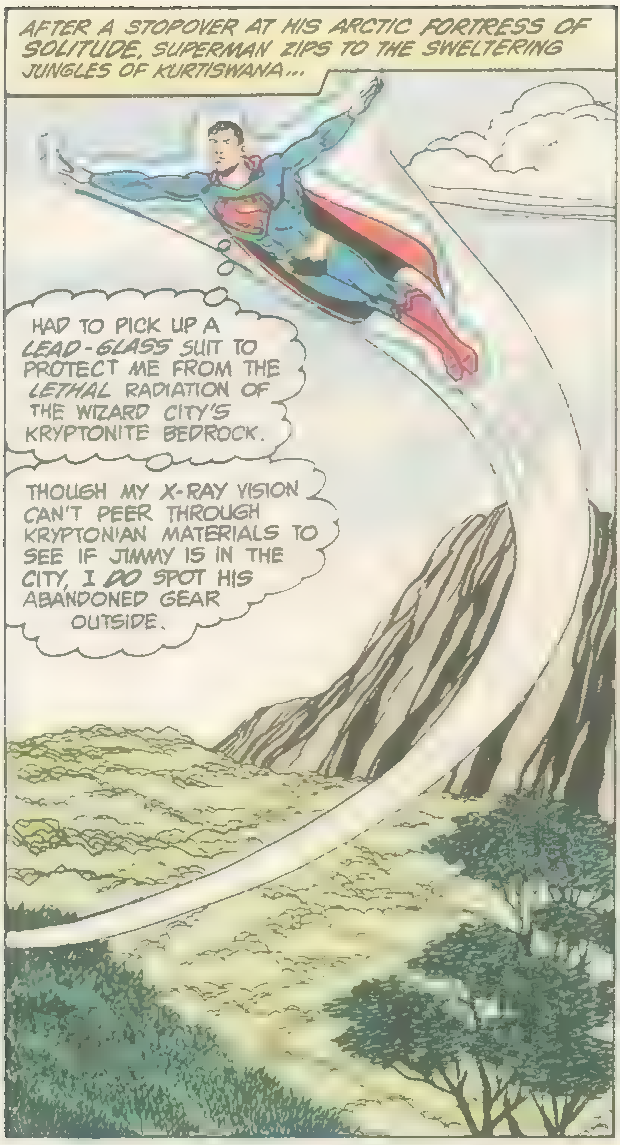

BACK AT THE GALAXY BUILDING AS CLARK KENT:
NOTHING I CAN DO BUT WAIT AND SEE IF HE TURNS UP AGAIN--
CLARK! OH, CLARK--!

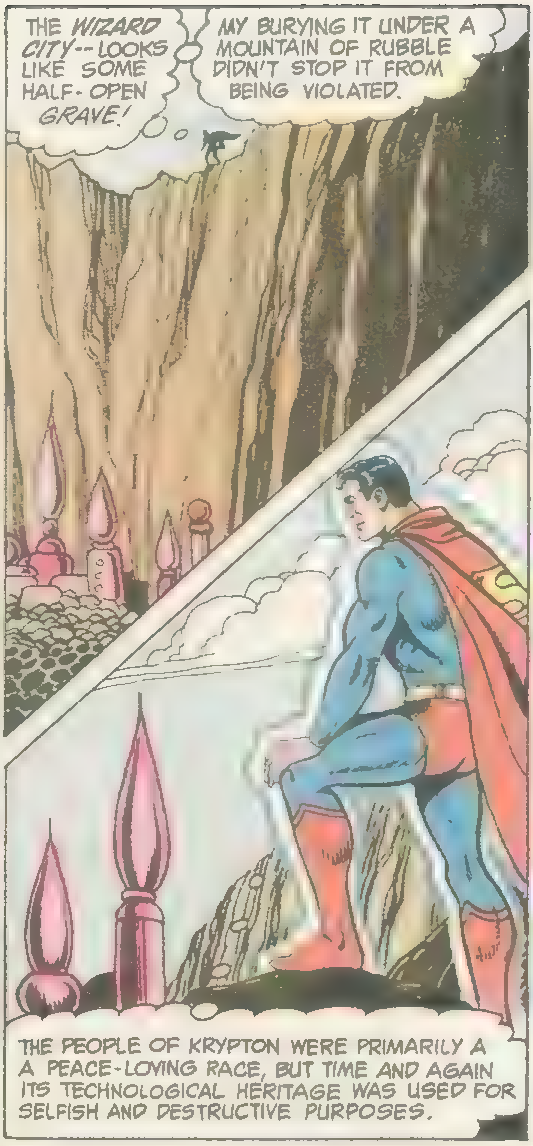
PROFESSOR MARK OLSEN! GREAT TO SEE YOU! HOW'VE YOU BEEN DOING?
SAME AS ANY RETIRED ARCHAEOLOGIST -- TRAVELING -- LECTURING -- WRITING.
BUT I'M NOT HERE FOR SOCIAL REASONS -- I'M WORRIED SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO JIMMY!


THERE'S BEEN NO WORD FROM HIM SINCE HE ARRIVED IN KURTISWANA --A REMOTE AFRICAN COUNTRY-- SOME DAYS AGO.
PROFESSOR, AFTER ALL THOSE WILD ADVENTURES JIMMY HAS GONE THROUGH, HE'S CAPABLE OF MASTERING ANY EARTHLY SITUATION.
THAT'S JUST IT! THE DANGER HE FACES IS ANYTHING BUT EARTHLY IN -- THE WIZARD CITY!
THE WIZARD CITY--?!?
EVEN WITH MY POWER OF TOTAL RECALL, I'D ALL BUT FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE WIZARD CITY'S EXISTENCE!
WHEN KRYPTON EXPLODED, MANY ARTIFACTS SURVIVED-- INCLUDING ENTIRE CITIES.
ONE SUCH CITY LANDED IN KURTISWANA WHEN I WAS A TEEN.
"A CROOKED JUNGLE GUIDE NAMED VEDDERS FIRST DISCOVERED THE WIZARD CITY, ALONG WITH ITS FULLY FUNCTIONAL ARMORY.
"WITH THE HELP OF PROFESSOR OLSEN -- DISGUISED AS 'SUPERMAN' -- I SMASHED VEDDERS' PLAN TO USE THE WEAPONS TO GAIN GLOBAL DOMINATION."
DID VEDDERS UNEARTH THE ARMORY AND BECOME THAT ARMORED JUGGERNAUT I FOUGHT TODAY?
IF SO, JIMMY MAY BE IN DANGER-- AS WAS I!
PROFESSOR, IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER, I'LL TRY TO CONTACT SUPERMAN ABOUT JIMMY!
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--
--I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO!
8

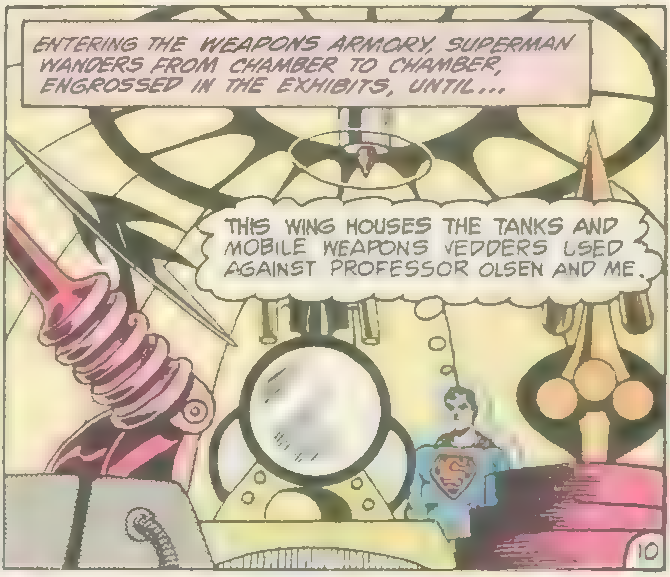
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

MEANWHILE, IN THE IMPOVERISHED SUICIDE SLUM SECTION OF METROPOLIS...
THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD-- JUST LIKE ALWAYS-- ONLY WORSE
WHO SAYS YA CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN?
RAP RAP
MA! 'S ME--
D-DESMOND--?
AIN'TCHA GLAD TO SEE ME?
I GOT LOTS OF WORK TO DO--AND I CAN'T STOP--
NO MORE SLAVIN' AROUND FOR YOU, MA! I GOT MY OWN BUSINESS AND MAKIN' TONS OF CASH, SEE?
I'LL TAKE YA AWAY FROM THIS HELLHOLE!
NO, NO! I KNOW WHY YOU DISAPPEARED YEARS AGO--
THE POLICE WERE AFTER YOU-- FOR MURDER!
NEVER CHANGE ANY MONEY OF YOURS IS THE RESULT OF EVIL AND DISHONEST WORK!
I WON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.
GET OUT! AND TAKE YOUR BLOOD-STAINED MONEY!
DESTRUCTION IS THE ONLY THING ON DESMOND DEXTER'S MIND AS HE HEADS FOR HIS STOLEN ARMOR.
I :SOB: WISH I NEVER HAD A SON-- AND FOR YEARS-- I HAVEN'T!


AFTER A STOPOVER AT HIS ARCTIC FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE, SUPERMAN ZIPS TO THE SWELTERING JUNGLES OF KURTISWANA...
HAD TO PICK UP A LEAD-GLASS SUIT TO PROTECT ME FROM THE LETHAL RADIATION OF THE WIZARD CITY'S KRYPTONITE BEDROCK.
THOUGH MY X-RAY VISION CAN'T PEER THROUGH KRYPTONIAN MATERIALS TO SEE IF JIMMY IS IN THE CITY, I DO SPOT HIS ABANDONED GEAR OUTSIDE.


THE WIZARD CITY--LOOKS LIKE SOME HALF-OPEN GRAVE!
MY BURYING IT UNDER A MOUNTAIN OF RUBBLE DIDN'T STOP IT FROM BEING VIOLATED.
THE PEOPLE OF KRYPTON WERE PRIMARILY A A PEACE-LOVING RACE, BUT TIME AND AGAIN ITS TECHNOLOGICAL HERITAGE WAS USED FOR SELFISH AND DESTRUCTIVE PURPOSES.

NOW THAT I'VE EXPOSED THE ARMORY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA, I CAN GO ON WITH MY MISSION.


ENTERING THE WEAPONS ARMORY, SUPERMAN WANDERS FROM CHAMBER TO CHAMBER, ENGROSSED IN THE EXHIBITS, UNTIL...
THIS WING HOUSES THE TANKS AND MOBILE WEAPONS VEDDERS USED AGAINST PROFESSOR OLSEN AND ME.

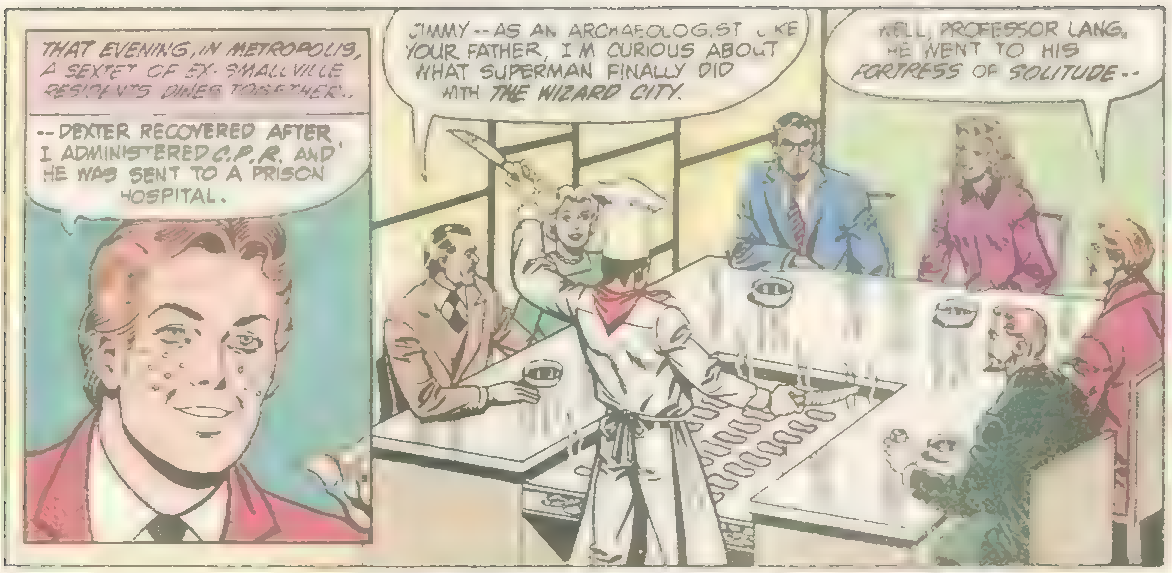
LAST TIME I WAS HERE I COULDN'T READ KRYPTONESE WELL ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT THIS SECTION WAS DEDICATED TO WEAPONS CONFISCATED FROM BOKOS ISLE.
ITS RESIDENTS WERE HABITUAL CRIMINALS WHO CONSIDERED CRIME A CULTURAL ART AND SCIENCE!
GREAT KRYPTON! THERE'S JIMMY-- RACKED UP UNDER THOSE SPECTRUM BEAMS!
AND VEDDERS. PINNED UNDER SOME RUBBLE!
JIMMY'S IN THE GREATER DANGER-- SO HE GETS RESCUED FIRST!
UH-OH--THOSE BEAMS-- MAKING MY SKIN TINGLE!
S-SUPERMAN-- G-GET AWAY-- TRAP--
UNH!-- BEAMS CONSTRICTING AROUND ME-- PARALYZING ME-- IN A KALEIDOSCOPE OF PAIN!
NOW THAT THE CREEP-TONIAN IS HELPLESS - IT'S TIME I MAKE MY ENTRANCE

THOSE BEAMS STRIKING YOU ARE HARMLESS TO US EARTH-TYPES, SUPERMAN -- BUT DEADLY TO KRYPTONIANS!
NOW THAT YOUR SPASMS HAVE WRECKED YOUR PROTECTIVE LEAD SUIT, IT'S SAFE TO TURN OFF THE RAYS -- YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE!
Y KNOW, KRYPTONIAN, WE GOT SOMETHIN' IN COMMON -- WE'RE BOTH HOME-LESS ORPHANS.
ONLY, SINCE I GOT NOTHIN' TO LIVE FOR -- WHY SHOULD YOU -- OR ANYONE ELSE?
AN' BELIEVE ME, I GOT THE POWER AN' MEANS TO [illegible] OFF, ONE OF THEM TELEPATHIC HELMETS I FOUND HERE LEARNED ME HOW TO WORK THE HIGH-TECH GIMMICKS.
WITH THE GRENADES I GOT HERE, I'LL TRIGGER A CHAIN REACTION THAT'LL WASTE EARTH AN' EVERYONE ON IT!
[illegible] STOP YOU [illegible]!
KRUK!
HA HA! I'M TOO FAST FOR YOU, SUPERMAN!
SO LONG SUCKER. I'M OFF TO BLOW UP THE EARTH.
KA-POW
WITH MY PAL ZONKED OUT, IT'S UP TO ME TO GET US OUT OF THIS MESS!
JIM -- [illegible] CAT -- [illegible]!
CAN'T MAKE OUT WHAT HE'S TRYING TO SAY --
--OR WHY HE'S POINTING TO THAT OTHER CHAMBER. BETTER TAKE A LOOK --!

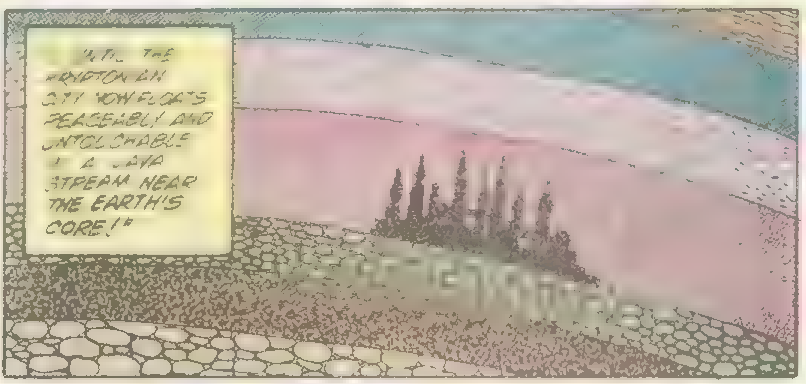
THIS VIDEO-PANEL SEEMS TO BE THE MASTER CONTROL FOR THESE MOBILE WEAPONS -- IN WHICH CASE I'VE SOLVED SUPERMAN'S MESSAGE. CAT FOR CATAPULT!
:PUFF: TOOK EVERYTHING OUT OF ME :GRUNT: TO DRAG AND LIFT SUPERMAN INTO THIS CATAPULT CRADLE.
OKAY HERE GOES
WHOOSH!!
LATER BACK IN METROPOLIS..
AND IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE THE ARMORED TERRORIST HOVERING ABOVE US HE HAS KILLED SUPERMAN - AND IS THREATENING TO DESTROY OUR [illegible]
TODAY THE [illegible] TONIGHT THE WHOLE CRUMMY WORLD
CRUMMY--?

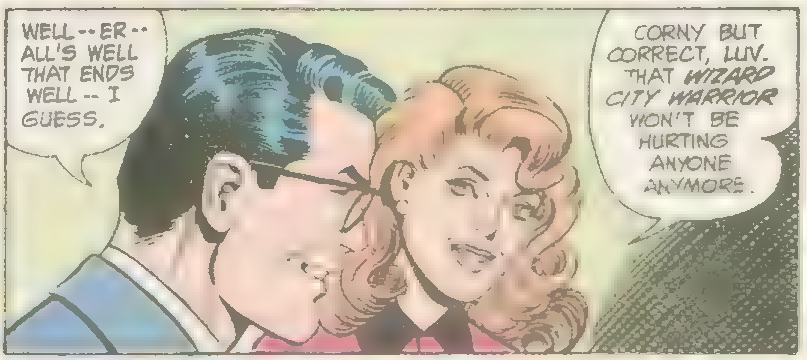
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT MY ADOPTED HOME AND MY FRIENDS!
Y-YOU'RE ALIVE!? THERE WAS NO WAY--
TELL THAT TO JIMMY OLSEN! BUT FIRST, TELL ME WHERE THOSE BOMBS ARE!
NEVER! WE'LL ALL DIE TOGETHER!
KRAK
YOU MAY BE MORE POWERFUL THAN I AM, BUT I'VE GOT SOMETHING ELSE GOING FOR ME--
--THE DETERMINATION TO WIN--
WHAAM
OOOF!
A LUCKY PUNCH, SUPERMAN -- AND YOUR LAST!
--ALONG WITH THE DETERMINATION TO SAVE MY FRIENDS AND THEIR FAMILIES!
FRIENDS? -- FAMILY? YA BLEW IT! THAT MAKES ME MADDER -- AND STRONGER THAN EVER!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D EVER SEE THE DAY SUPERMAN WOULD BE DEFEATED!
A PLAN BETTER CRISTALIZE IN HIS MIND OR WE'RE ALL DOOMED!

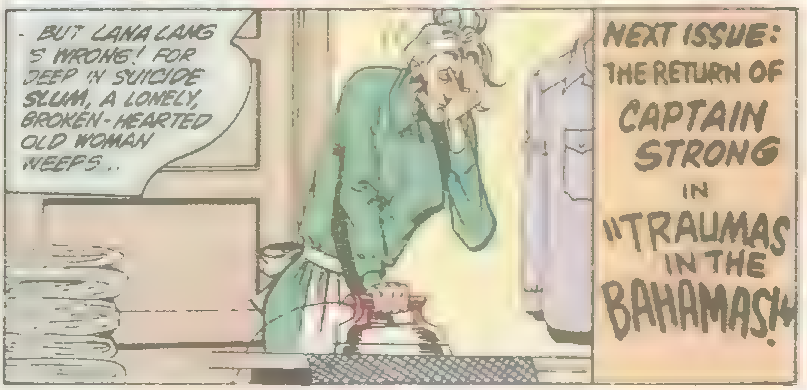
"CRYSTALLIZE"? LANA, I LOVE YA!
TIME TO CHANGE FIGHTING TACTICS!
COMIN' AT YA FOR THE DEATHBLOW, SUPES--
"UGH! C-CAN'T M-MOVE..."
LANA'S REMARK REMINDED ME OF MY HOLO-CRYSTAL! IT TRIGGERED THE IDEA TO PUT AN UNBREAKABLE KLURKOR WRESTLING HOLD ON HIM!
I GET... LAST LAUGH! TRIGGERED BOMBS... CIRCLING EARTH ...AAAGH!
HE'S PASSED OUT! GOT TO ROUND UP THOSE BOMBS IN TIME--
SPLIT-SECONDS LATER
NOW TO SUB-WARP-- BEFORE THESE "HOT" BOMBS GO OFF AND SHRED ME INTO CONFETTI!
THERE THEY GO-- INTO THAT DEAD STAR-SUN!
WHAT A BLAST! MAYBE IT'LL ACTIVATE THE SUN AGAIN!

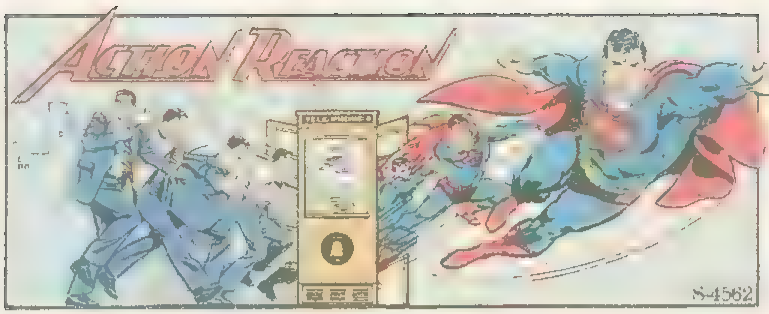

THAT EVENING, IN METROPOLIS, A SEXTET OF EX-SMALLVILLE RESIDENTS DINES TOGETHER..
--DEXTER RECOVERED AFTER I ADMINISTERED C.P.R., AND HE WAS SENT TO A PRISON HOSPITAL.
JIMMY--AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST LIKE YOUR FATHER, I'M CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT SUPERMAN FINALLY DID WITH THE WIZARD CITY.
WELL, PROFESSOR LANG, HE WENT TO HIS FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE--

AND WHIPPED UP A LARGER VERSION OF THE REPULSOR-PROJECTOR DEXTER STOLE. THEN, TRAINING A WIDE BEAM ON THE SITE, FORCED THE CITY DOWN, DOWN, DOWN...


"...THE FORTRESS AND CITY NOW FLOAT PEACEABLY AND UNTOUCHABLE IN A LAVA STREAM NEAR THE EARTH'S CORE!"


WELL--ER--ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL--I GUESS.
CORNY BUT CORRECT, LUV. THAT WIZARD CITY WARRIOR WON'T BE HURTING ANYONE ANYMORE.


- BUT LANA LANG'S WRONG! FOR DEEP IN SUICIDE SLUM, A LONELY, BROKEN-HEARTED OLD WOMAN WEEPS..
NEXT ISSUE: THE RETURN OF CAPTAIN STRONG IN "TRAUMAS IN THE BAHAMAS!"



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666 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10103

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Dear Julie and Bob:

I can vividly recall the day in late August 1966, when I ever-so-impatiently waited for the mailman to deliver my subscription copy of ACTION COMICS. There I was, in the sweltering desert heat, knowing that this just had to be the day when the dawdling mailman would deliver #242.

Sure enough, he placed the copy in my hands. I quickly slipped the issue out of its protective wrapper to expose a gorgeous Curt Swan cover, only to nearly fall over on a prickly pear cactus when I viewed the interior art! There was the most bizarre yet striking art I had ever seen in a *Superman* comic book! *Superman*/Clark Kent appeared so bold, confident, invincible, and had such a serious demeanor about himself. This was so diverse from Swan's graceful, handsome, and gentle renderings.

It was a sight to behold and after all those years, Wayne Boring's art in ACTION #561 is a sight to behold again. Dave Hunt's inks have modernized and tightened up Wayne's pencil work, but one can still relish the fact that Mr. Boring is back at the drawing board. Indeed he is! If that isn't a classic Boring-*Superman* flying pose on page 4 of "The Past and Future Superman," I don't know what is!

And of course it was a wise editorial decision on your part, Julie, to include "The Great Toyman Trivia Contest" in this issue. Paul Kupperberg skillfully captured the tongue-in-cheek essence of the villainous Mr. Schott, another highlight of the issue. We were also given numerous panels featuring Inspector Henderson, a character not included in a *Superman* story for Rao knows how long.

Hey, I just realized something quite amazing! ACTION #561 incorporated E. Nelson Bridwell, Wayne Boring, and Kurt Schaffenberger all in one issue. Just think, the Silver Age of DC is upon us again! (Mort Weisinger, you may rest in peace.)

ALAN GARY GIROUX
Phoenix, AZ

Knowing Mort, he's probably trying to figure out a way to make a comeback too!—BR

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

After reading ACTION #561, I found something interesting in both stories. No, it wasn't the artwork, which was the usual exceptionally high quality DC work. Nor was it the plots necessarily. It was the underlying messages that as young children we learn from fairy tales.

In "The Great Toyman Trivia Contest," we find through the unusually juvenile personality of the Toyman that in a villain (and, quite possibly, in real-life criminals) there is an element of childishness. This can be the riddles of The Riddler, the pranks of The Joker, the grudges of Lex Luthor, or the Toyman's toys. Modern-day criminals are simply the result of a childhood incident carrying itself over to adulthood (with sometimes psychotic results).

In "The Past and Future Superman" another message is conveyed: that you can always compensate (or try to) for weaknesses, but it's better to be without the weaknesses from the start. Do the job that you're best suited for and don't try to fix yourself up for everything.

Leave it to *Superman* to tell a good story ... with a little help from his friends: you reliable DC staffers.

LUKAS VENIZELOS
31-49 38th Street
Astoria, NY 11103

* * * * *

Dear Julie and Bob,

Hallelujah!

I loved Wayne Boring's four pages in the ALL-STAR SQUADRON ANNUAL, but his eight-page story in ACTION #561 was twice as good. Page six had *Superman* looking more like himself than he has in years. It was like seeing an old friend restored to the peak of health. (If you have trouble reading this letter, it's because I'm typing it with my fingers crossed, hoping that Wayne Boring is back to stay.)

Hey, I just noticed something! ACTION hasn't shrunk to eight pages. (I wouldn't mind, though. I'd gladly pay 75¢ for eight pages of Wayne Boring's *Superman*.) There is another story in ACTION #561 and it's very good too. I enjoyed the Toyman story for what it had (Kurt Schaffenberger's fresh, clean art, greatly missed since SUPERBOY was canceled) and for what it didn't have (a tiresome slugfest).

All in all, I'd have to give this issue an A++. Even the *Guest Meanwhile* column was good. Better than good, it was great! In fact, I think DC ought to hire that Robert Loy fellow. The guy has talent!

ROBERT LOY
175 Braly Drive
Summerville, SC 29483

Talent, yes. Modesty...maybe.—BR

* * * * *

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much for bringing Wayne Boring back on the job. It thrilled me to death to see his art on *Superman* again.

I hope some of the younger readers enjoyed this sample of Wayne's great talent. To me, he is *the Superman* artist! Wayne is to *Superman* what Kurt Schaffenberger is to *Superboy*.

You've made this old reader a happy man.

STEPHEN SCOTT BEAU SMITH
No. 1 Fourth Street
Barboursville, WV 25504

We'd like to point out that virtually every other issue of the BEST OF DC DIGEST is a **Superman** *edition and that these* **Superman** *editions frequently contain samples of Wayne Boring's art from the 1950's and 60's.*

* * * * *

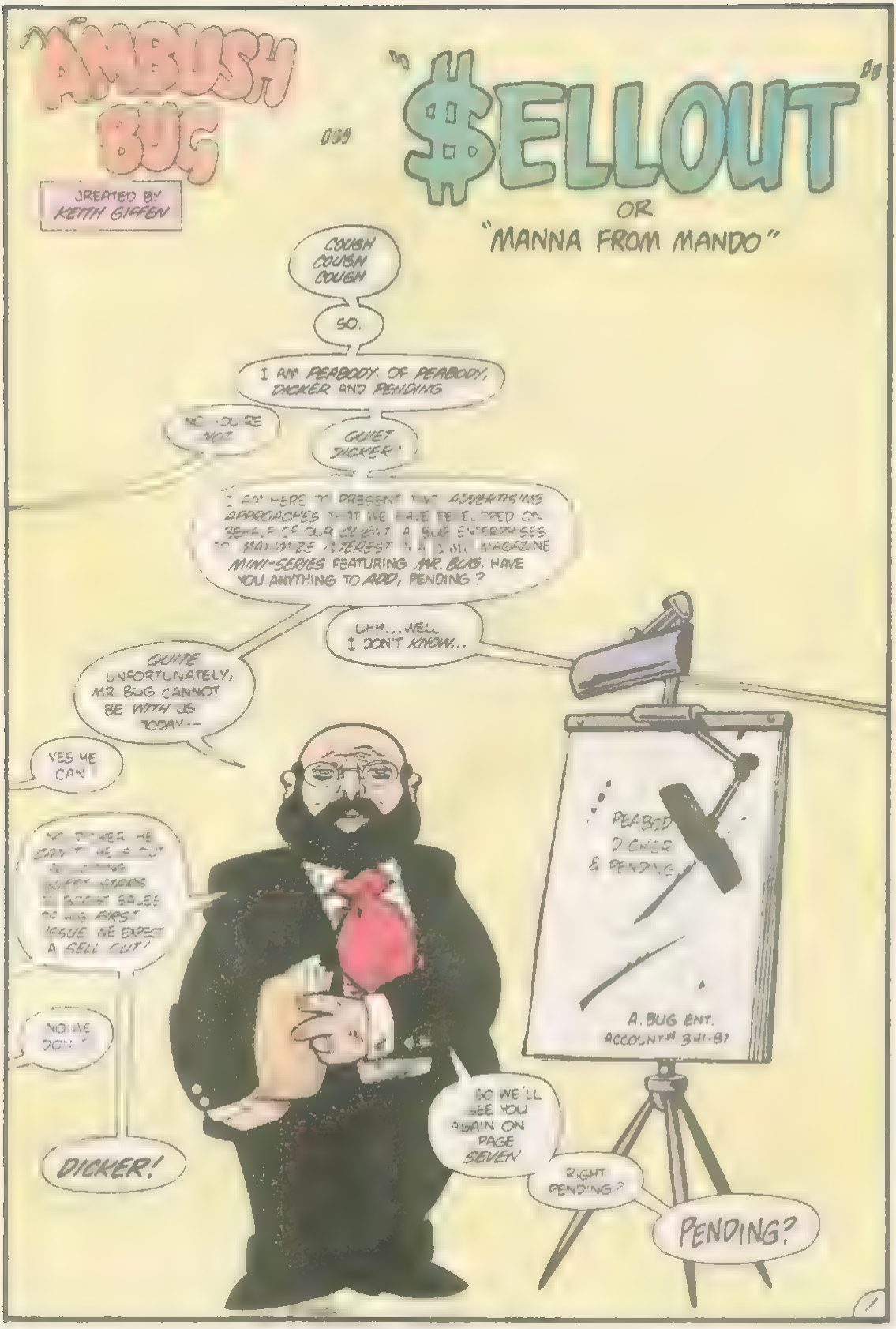
Action Company:

Wow! First Keith Giffen, and now .. Wayne *(Superman)* Boring! Thank you for making my first two ACTIONs in months the two best I've read in years! I've picked up a great new way to spend 75¢.

B.C. MOORE
Wichita, KS

All this talk about Wayne Boring's **Superman** *prompted somebody to post a cartoon on the DC bulletin board. The scene is Bruce Wayne and Superman sitting talking. Bruce is showing his photo album to Superman, with shots of "Me waxing the Batmobile ... me brushing my teeth .. etc." and Superman all but nodding off. The caption: A WAYNE BORING SUPERMAN! (Think about it!)*

And on that note, be sure to join us again next issue. Till then, remember to "Look, up in the sky...!"—Bob Rozakis


AMBUSH BUG
CREATED BY KEITH GIFFEN
"$ELLOUT"
OR
"MANNA FROM MANDO"
COUGH COUGH COUGH
SO.
I AM PEABODY, OF PEABODY, DICKER AND PENDING
NO, YOU'RE NOT
QUIET DICKER!
I'M HERE TO PRESENT THE ADVERTISING APPROACHES THAT WE'VE DEVELOPED ON BEHALF OF OUR CLIENT, A SLEW ENTERPRISES TO MAXIMIZE INTEREST IN THE MAGAZINE MINI-SERIES FEATURING MR. BUG. HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO ADD, PENDING?
UHH... WELL I DON'T KNOW...
QUITE UNFORTUNATELY, MR. BUG CANNOT BE WITH US TODAY...
YES HE CAN!
NO DICKER HE CAN'T HE'S OUT [illegible] NIFTY STORIES TO BOOST SALES ON HIS FIRST ISSUE WE EXPECT A SELL OUT!
NO WE DON'T
DICKER!
PEABODY DICKER & PENDING
A. BUG ENT. ACCOUNT # 341-87
SO WE'LL SEE YOU AGAIN ON PAGE SEVEN
RIGHT PENDING?
PENDING?

IN SEARCH OF
SUPERMAN
SUPERMAN
RED!
OKAY, OKAY... I'LL DO IT
BUT IF I AGREE TO APPEAR IN YOUR FIRST ISSUE, YOU HAVE TO PROMISE YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE ME A LAUGHINGSTOCK!
NO WAY, SUPES! WE'LL SHOW EXCERPTS FROM YOUR GREATEST ADVENTURES IT'LL BE LIKE A TRIBUTE!
REMEMBER THE TIME YOU TURNED INTO A CAVEMAN?
AND THE TIME YOU CAME IN CONTACT WITH RED KRYPTONITE AND GREW THAT BIG THIRD EYE ON THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD?
AND THEN -- ;CHUCKLE: THERE WAS THAT ;HA HA: STATUE YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH
AND YOUR COUSIN SUPERGIRL ;HO HO HO!: FELL FOR (I CAN'T STAND IT!) A HORSE!
OR HOW ABOUT THE TIME YOU DESIGNED THIS SUIT TO PROTECT YOU AGAINST KRYPTONITE?
AND YOU FORGOT TO INCLUDE EYE HOLES AND YOU ENDED UP FLYING BLIND AND SMASHING UP ALL YOUR FAVORITE TROPHIES!
OSSSSS
AND THEN THERE'S THE BIZARRO RAY...
ME AM SURE TO INCLUDE ALL THOSE TALES AYN'T I?
PSSSSS
POW!
YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR THIS TIME, PAL!
THE TRIBUTE IS OFF!

HERE COMES
THE INARTICULATE
BUG
IT'S CURBY MAGIK!
THIS BURST FOR RENT!
GOOB!
ARP!
GREK!
URGH!
MOO!
ARF!
VERSUS
THE SUPER-INTELLIGENCE OF
THE READER
I, THE READER, ISSUE A CATEGORICAL CHALLENGE TO THE INSIPID IMBECILE KNOWN AS THE BUG.. AWP!!
CRUNCH

IN SEARCH OF
BATMAN
OR
POUND-WISE and PENNY-FOOLISH!
IN THE HIDDEN VAULT BENEATH WAYNE MANOR, THE BATTLE-SCARRED TOOLS OF THE CRIME-FIGHTER
THIS IS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST PUZZLES OF MY ENTIRE CAREER
I NEED A NINE-LETTER WORD FOR "LUNATIC"
POP!
WHOOSH
CRASH
BATS! IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GUEST-STAR IN MY BOOK CAN I JOIN THE OUTSIDERS?

Dear Mr Giordano,

Here's two attempts to get printed Look at it this way· it's better than another one of my annoying letters to you. Anyway, I love to make speeches and I need the money. Okay, let's go

(Sound of throat clearing)

Dear Whoever-Reads-These-Things,

I'd like to speak to you about a subject that has been ignored for years, an American tragedy, a shameful blot on the comics industry

I'd like to discuss heroine abuse and neglect

Women in comics are treated terribly by both DC and Marvel, mostly by Marvel, but Jim Shooter doesn't do guest columns. They are downplayed, put-upon, wasted, ignored, and stereotyped into six categories. I like to call these categories the Six De's

The first De is Dependence. The heroine is somehow linked to a hero, either by costume (like Batgirl), by relation (like Huntress), by romance (like Black Canary), or by joining a team (like Wonder Girl). Thus, the heroine has a bloody hard time standing alone and independent Eventually, she becomes either a sidekick ("Green Arrow's Girlfriend, The Black Canary") or a bookend (Hawkman and Hawkwoman)

The next De is Deemphasis Everyone ignores the heroine and hopes she'll go away. DC has an enormous wealth of interesting, exciting, and enjoyable heroines, most of whom haven't appeared in years.

Demoralize often goes under the guise of "characterization." The heroine is given a quirk in her personality or a mental aberration that cripples her A good example is The Thorn's split personality, which makes it impossible for her to fight in the daytime. The most common personality modes are The Bubblehead ("Oh, dear, this fight to the death with Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant will simply ruin my manicure"), the Battlehappy Battler (I will tear Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant into little pieces!"), and the Weak and Helpless Type ("I would fight Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant, but I'm so afraid of snakes and I'm a pacifist anyway")

Deglamorize is ridiculous but effective The heroine is given an ugly costume, which effectively weakens her popularity without too badly weakening her ability in combat I'm sure we're all familiar with the beautiful weather-goddess who was phenominally popular and was just about to branch out into solo guest-appearances and maybe even her own mini-series until the writer suddenly decided to have her go punk, complete with mohawk. This set her upon the road to ruin as she progressed to the next stage...

.Depower! Of course, the aforementioned character was exposed to the fullest and most literal example of Depowering She was stripped of her superhuman qualities and rendered utterly normal .. a fate worse than death. There is a more subtle form of Depowering, where the heroine's talents are downplayed and presented as trivial. That way, she **needs** a hero around to keep her from getting killed. Thus, deadly destruct-bolts become stun-stings, extrasensory perception becomes "I sense an evil presence somewhere in this room and even telepathic mind-control becomes a parlor trick

The most drastic step is Death It means exactly what you think it means. The heroine is quickly and not-very-neatly disposed of. Ever since Phoenix left this mortal coil, hundreds of heroines are sacrificed daily in a vain attempt to produce a classic comparable to her story. The only one that even comes close is "The Judas Contract," which featured the death of Terra—a death that, let's face it, we **knew** was going to happen. Too many heroines have been sacrificed to the great volcano god Fan-Dom It's about time the writers found a new cliché to overuse.

Now, I'm not suggesting that the comics creators are engaging in a sinister conspiracy It's doubtful that Mr. Giordano has even realized the problem But it is sincerely wished that someone would realize what's going on and take steps to correct the problem. Why is it that when a character must go insane, sacrifice her life to save humanity, or get blasted by the neural-vac power-remover it's always a woman?

I represent W.A.S.P., the Women Anti-Stereotyping Patrol. We have been attempting to correct this injustice (by the way, if any W.A.S.P.ers are reading this . for Heaven's sakes, write! I'm good, but I can't do it all alone!), but we require some help. If a favorite heroine of yours has been suffering from one of the six symptoms, write to the comic of your choice (don't bother Mr Giordano ... that's my job) and complain, politely but firmly If any submitters are reading this, consider revamping an old heroine or creating a new one as your project. It might be fun. I know I had fun when I did it (I didn't have fun when DC rejected it but that's not important). And if any professional comics writers are reading this ... for gosh sakes, lay off the heroines, willya?

I thank you for your time Now let's see if I can get this thing printed

Michael Pickens
Greentree Apartments
784 Blacksnake Rd
D-4
Utica, OH 43080

I hope this doesn't fall under defamatory ' I tried to present the facts as I see them and to give DC a fair shake. If you **do** decide to print it, I believe you'll have room for a rebuttal

Action Comics 565: A Superman solo tale, plus another chapter with the Ambush Bug!

Detective Comics 548: The Catwoman is back! And a Green Arrow story!

Tales of the Legion of Super-Heroes 321: Dawnstar and Brainiac 5 find themselves in uncharted space!

World's Finest Comics 313: Can Superman and Batman get the Network off the air for good?

All-Star Squadron 43: Action with the Guardian, Sandman Sandy and the Manhunter!

Arion 29: Atlantis is besieged and Arion's power is not enough!

Spanner's Galaxy 4: Baka catches up with Spanner and Gadg!

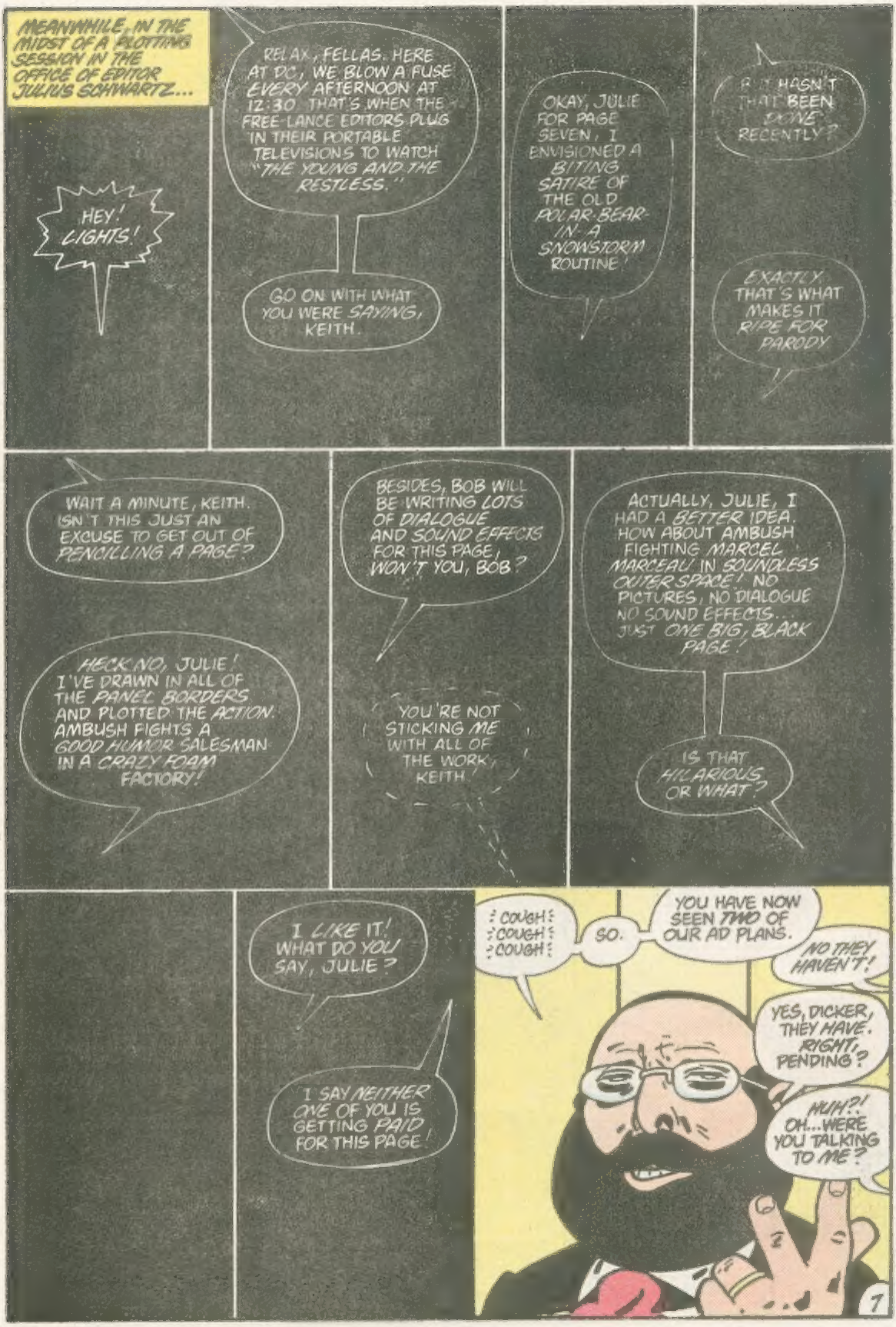
Sun Devils 9: The traitor in the ranks is revealed!

America vs. the JSA 3 The JSA is tried for treason and the Wizard is back

V 2: What mysterious deal has a small town struck with the aliens?

THE UH-OH SQUAD
WITH BLOTTO
$.75
3½
APR 184
DISAPPROVED BY THE COSMIC CODE AUTHORITY
UH-OH!
AMBUSH BUG
UH-OH!
MS. MOHAWK
UH-OH!
AND JERRY MATHERS...
...AS THE CLEAVER.
6

IN SEARCH OF
WONDER WOMAN
OR "BABY, I'M A WANT YOU!"
POP!
HAND OVER THE PURSE, LADY.
HELP! ROBBERY! MURDER!
SHUT UP, YOU, OLD BAG! ALL I WANT IS YOUR MON--
CLOP!
IT LOOKS LIKE I ARRIVED JUST IN TIME, MA'AM. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH, THE BRUTE!
BUT IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN HIS LIKE TO GET THE BEST OF ME, YOUNG WOMAN!
I'M A DAUGHTER OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. MY NAME IS MRS. SAPPHO.
BUT DON'T BE FORMAL, DEAR. CALL ME SUFFERIN'.
SUFFERIN'... SAPPHO?
AT YOUR SERVICE. AND YOU ARE THE CELEBRATED WONDER WOMAN.
COINCIDENTALLY, I HAVE BEEN SENT TO SOLICIT YOUR APPEARANCE IN THE FIRST ISSUE OF OUR NEW FEMINIST MAGAZINE.
WELL... I DON'T USUALLY LEND MY NAME TO COMMERCIAL PUBLICATIONS...
DO IT FOR YOUR FELLOW WOMEN!
DO IT FOR THE E.R.A.
DO IT FOR EQUAL WORK! EQUAL PAY!
DO IT FOR ME, SWEETCAKES!
SWEETCAKES?
BOY, THOSE AMAZONS ARE TOUCHY!
I GUESS I WOULD BE, TOO, IF I HAD HER SALES FIGURES.


MEANWHILE, IN THE MIDST OF A PLOTTING SESSION IN THE OFFICE OF EDITOR JULIUS SCHWARTZ...
HEY! LIGHTS!
RELAX, FELLAS. HERE AT DC, WE BLOW A FUSE EVERY AFTERNOON AT 12:30 THAT'S WHEN THE FREE-LANCE EDITORS PLUG IN THEIR PORTABLE TELEVISIONS TO WATCH "THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS."
GO ON WITH WHAT YOU WERE SAYING, KEITH.
OKAY, JULIE FOR PAGE SEVEN, I ENVISIONED A BITING SATIRE OF THE OLD POLAR-BEAR-IN-A-SNOWSTORM ROUTINE!
R. T. HASN'T THAT BEEN DONE RECENTLY?
EXACTLY. THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT RIPE FOR PARODY
WAIT A MINUTE, KEITH. ISN'T THIS JUST AN EXCUSE TO GET OUT OF PENCILLING A PAGE?
HECK NO, JULIE! I'VE DRAWN IN ALL OF THE PANEL BORDERS AND PLOTTED THE ACTION. AMBUSH FIGHTS A GOOD HUMOR SALESMAN IN A CRAZY FOAM FACTORY!
BESIDES, BOB WILL BE WRITING LOTS OF DIALOGUE AND SOUND EFFECTS FOR THIS PAGE, WON'T YOU, BOB?
YOU'RE NOT STICKING ME WITH ALL OF THE WORK, KEITH!
ACTUALLY, JULIE, I HAD A BETTER IDEA. HOW ABOUT AMBUSH FIGHTING MARCEL MARCEAU IN SOUNDLESS OUTER SPACE! NO PICTURES, NO DIALOGUE NO SOUND EFFECTS... JUST ONE BIG, BLACK PAGE!
IS THAT HILARIOUS, OR WHAT?
I LIKE IT! WHAT DO YOU SAY, JULIE?
I SAY NEITHER ONE OF YOU IS GETTING PAID FOR THIS PAGE!
:COUGH: :COUGH: :COUGH:
SO.
YOU HAVE NOW SEEN TWO OF OUR AD PLANS.
NO THEY HAVEN'T!
YES, DICKER, THEY HAVE. RIGHT, PENDING?
HUH?! OH...WERE YOU TALKING TO ME?
7

:SOB:
HEY! YOUSE ARE DAT AMBUSH BUG GUY.
:HIC:
LEAVE ME ALONE.
DON'T BE SAD, LI'L BUG. I'M HERE TA HELP. I'M YER GUARDIAN ANGEL.
SORRY, I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU. I COULD'VE SWORN YOU WERE JUST A STINKY, DRUNKEN OLD BUM.
MY MISTAKE.
NO!
SONNY, IF YOU DON'T GET DAT CHIP OFF YA SHOULDER, DA ONLY GUEST STAR YA'LL GET FER YER BOOK...
...IS BROTHER POWER DA GEEK!
WHAT'S HE CHARGE?
YOU LISTEN TA ME, YA BIG OVERGROWN COCKROACH! I'M GOING TA HIT YOU WITH ONE OF THE GREAT TRUTHS OF OUR TIMES!
TEAM BOOKS SELL!
THANKS, G.A.!
I FORGOT ABOUT THEM!!
POP
- PLAUDITS -
KEITH GIFFEN
PLOTTER EXTRAORDINAIRE
PENCILLER WITHOUT PEER.
ROBERT LOREN FLEMING
BALLOONER WITH THE MOSTEST.
BOB OKSNER
INKING FROM HEAVEN.
ANTHONY TOLLIN
COLORING-- WOW!
JOHN COSTANZA
BEST PRINTING SINCE GUTENBERG.
JULIUS SCHWARTZ
BECAUSE WE NEEDED AN EDITOR.
8